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Inaugural Dissertation W. E. H.

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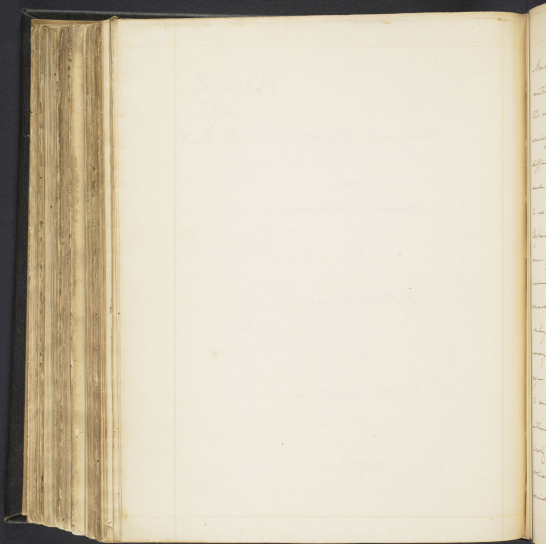
by

J. Walter Bowler

of

South Carolina

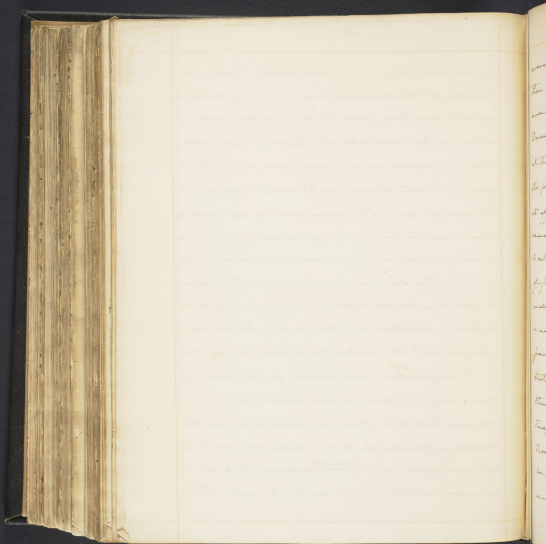
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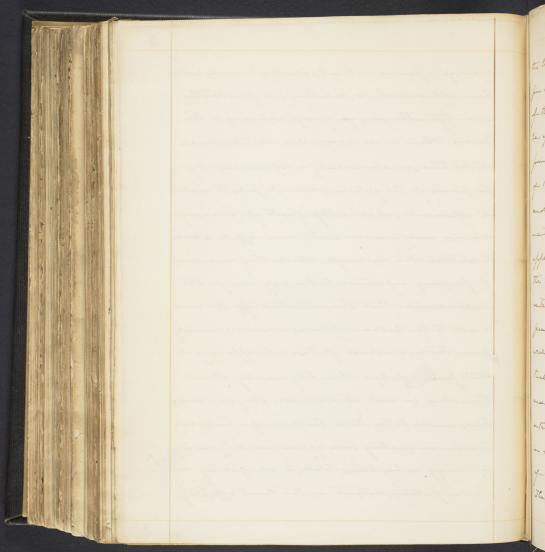
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Haemorrhage has been divided by systematic writers into the retentive and the suppurative of the uterus. Deriving its consequence from the severity of the causes producing it, as well as the difficulty which is experienced in its treatment and cure, retention of the menses presents itself to us in an very interesting and important light. Expanding its violence on the faintest parts of our system, the subject is on this account universally calculated to excite a spirit of research in the mind of an enlightened physician, with this hope that his labours may end in the acquisition of such knowledge as will enable him in most instances to mitigate or entirely remove the various attendants on this disease. At the age of fourteen a discharge took place from the female which is called menarche, and which is said by some to be a secretion, while others

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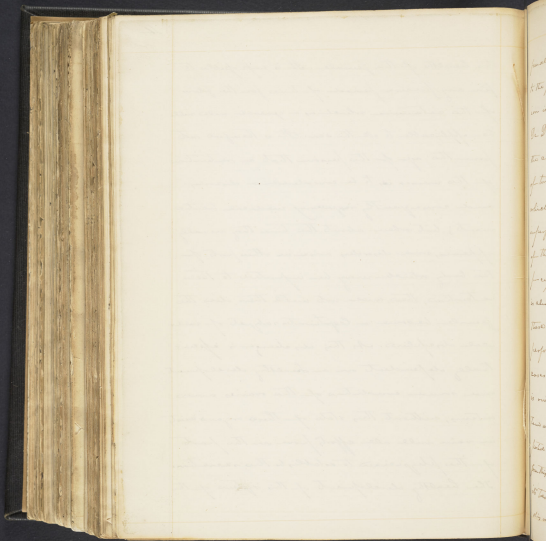
affirm that it is pure coagulable blood. ^{the}
 period at which this discharge occurs, varies in
 different countries, being later in cold, and
 earlier in hot climates. In Lapland we are
 told the females do not menstruate until the
 age of twenty, whereas, in Persia, it occurs at
 the age of nine. The catamenia is also influ-
 enced in the time of its appearance by civil-
 ization, peculiarities of constitution, and habit
 of life. The Indian women of North America
 do not menstruate before the age of eighteen
 or twenty, as stated by Dr Rush. Dr Jussieu
 alleges that the discharge occurs in females
 of the city, earlier than in those of the country,
 and every physician has had occasion to
 observe that it is often postponed beyond the
 ordinary period of its establishment, without
 at all affecting the ^{health of the} individual thus cir-
 cumstanced. In this country however, the



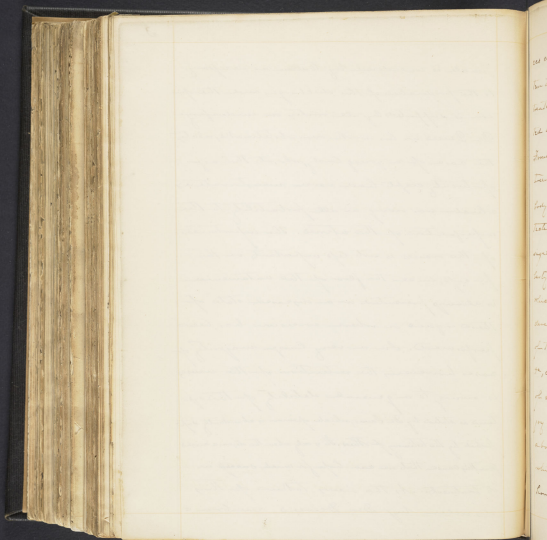
average period at which the nurses make their appearance, is, between the fourteenth and fifteenth years of age, according to Dr. Owens. When the discharge does not take place at this time, much anxiety is experienced by the friends of the girls, in whom it fails to make its appearance, whose restless spirits for a long time remain unappeased until some effort is made to establish the discharge, which they consider of primary importance to the welfare of the individual. But the nature of the menarche is not to be looked upon as a disease merely from the circumstance of their not appearing at that period of life when they usually show themselves in most other women. They are sometimes much later than the average time noticed in making their appearance which may be owing, as has been stated, to idleness, or modes of living, without in the least affecting



the health of the female. It is impossible to
 find any precise periods of time for the flow
 of the catamenia which as a general rule will
 be applicable to all the sex. It is thought not
 from the age of the person that a retention
 of the menses is to be considered a disease
 and consequently requiring medical treat-
 ments; but when about the times they usually
 appear, such disorders arise in other parts of
 the body which may be imputed to their
 retentions, then, and not until then does the
 female become a legitimate subject of medi-
 cal discipline. As this change is essen-
 tially dependent on a healthy development
 and sound condition of the ovaries and
 uterus, without this state of these organs exist-
 ing, in vain will all efforts prove on the part
 of the physician to establish the secretion.
 The healthy development of this system of the



female is considered by Cullen as necessary
 to the formation of this discharge, and this opi-
 nion is supported by all writers on midwifery.
 Dr Deveree in his work on obstetrics, relates
 the case of a young lady, who, at the age
 of twenty eight had never menstruated,
 which was owing in all probability to the
 impaction of the uterus. The impaction
 of the ovaries is not less important in this
 respect, since the flow of the catamenia
 is always prevented in a diseased state of
 these organs or whose excision has been
 performed. In a very large majority of
 cases however, the retention of the menses,
 is owing to a general debility of the sys-
 tem as stated by Dr Cullen, which opinion is abundantly sup-
 ported by the testimony of others. It is only when the disease arises
 from this cause that we can hope for much success in
 its treatment. As the views taken of this
 disorder by Dr Deveree run thus =



ces every possible condition of the female system in which it can exist, I shall deliver the treatment of it in the various states he has pointed out, and in the order he has detailed.

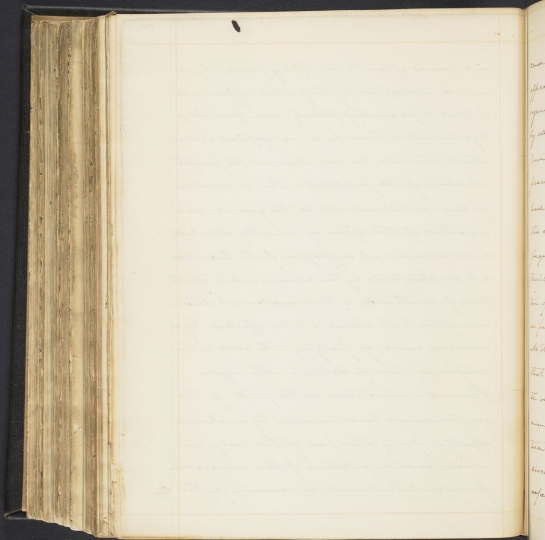
From the very strong sympathy that exists between the genital organs and other parts of the body, any defect in them, will readily be detected by an entire or partial absence of those signs which usually characterise the age of puberty. A girl in whom those signs are wanting which denote womanhood, such as a general development of the whole body, enlargement of the mammae, protrusion of hair on the pubes &c, cannot be considered a proper subject of medical treatment, especially if she enjoys good health, and time alone can bring about that desirable change in the parts which it were folly in us to attempt. If however a gradual development of the uterus

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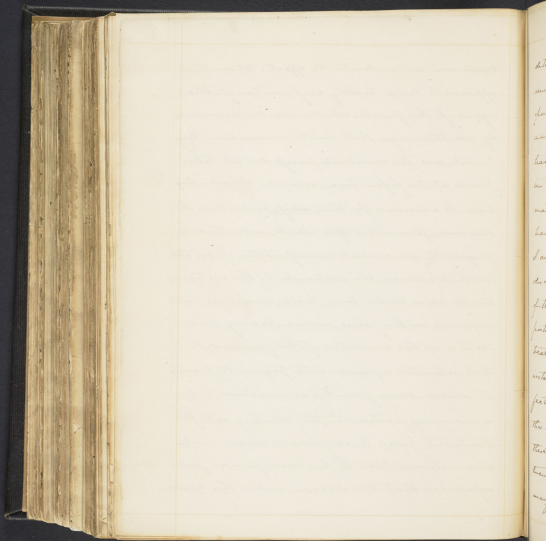
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and ovaries appear to be taking place, which will be indicated by the partial appearance of those signs denoting puberty, and flux albus, together with a train of various symptoms should attend, then will the case demand the prompt attention of the practitioner. The indications of cure in this case will be the general invigoration of the system by tonics, the cold baths and exercise. A suppression of the leucorrhoea is to be attempted by the administration of the tinc. of Cantharides, or the madder. A determination to the uterus is to be effected by a persevering course of purging with aloes or the compound tinc. of Stenmark with myrror.

Should a retardation in the growth of the genital organs be occasioned by a chronic affluence of any other part of the body, in which case a retardation of the menues will of course be induced, a removal of the



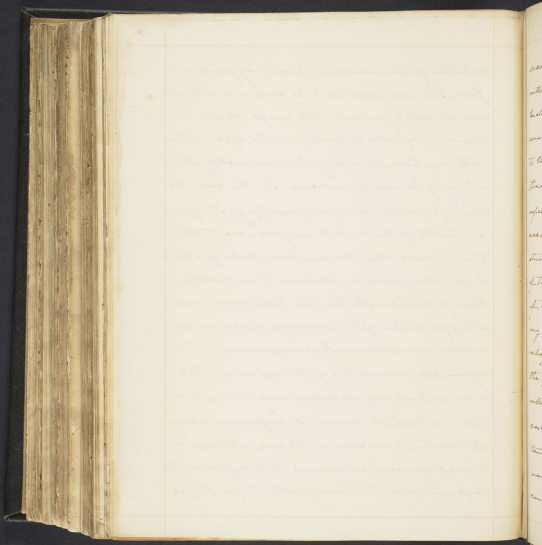
cause can alone operate the effect. When there
 appears to be a healthy conformation of these
 organs of the female, which will be discovered
 by all those signs that denote menarche being
 present, and the menstrual process does not take
 place at the proper time, recourse should be
 had to medicines for their relief & production. In
 this case, fluxus albus often attends, and there is
 frequently an evident manifestation of an at-
 tempt to produce the discharge by the irrita-
 tion of pains in the loins, back, and hips, with
 a fulness in the pelvis, and a bearing down.
 As it is in this condition of the female system
 that retention is found most frequently to exist
 it would seem from this circumstance to de-
 mand very particular ^{attention} in pointing out the
 treatment proper to be pursued under such
 circumstances. But it has been found from
 experience that the disease under this con-



action of body almost invariably yields to the
 remedies recommended in practical cases &
 affections of the genital organs, so that any
 modulation would be superfluous. Electricity
 has been considered as a valuable resource
 in this disease, and is held in some esti-
 mation by Dr. James, but from the trials I
 have seen made with it in other affections
 I am disposed to question its efficacy in any
 disorder. During my attendance on the practice
 of the And-house of this city, I have had an op-
 portunity of seeing several cases of this disease
 treated, but which proved ineffectual in every
 instance. This was owing probably to an imper-
 fection of the genital organs of the patients, since
 the signs which characterise the perfection of
 these parts were wanting. A girl eighteen or
 twenty years of age was brought into the infir-
 mary during the last summer, labouring under

The body of the letter is written in a cursive hand, and is mostly illegible due to fading and the angle of the page. The text appears to be a formal letter or a report, with several paragraphs of text. The handwriting is consistent throughout, suggesting it was written by a single person. The paper is aged and shows signs of wear, including discoloration and some staining. The left edge of the page shows the binding of the book, with several other pages visible underneath. The right edge of the page shows the gutter of the book, where it meets the next page. The overall appearance is that of a historical document, possibly from the 18th or 19th century.

retention of the menses in its most aggravated form. She was presented to the clasp wire with the view of exhibiting the horrible ravages which the disease is capable of making on the system, than with any hope of relieving her wretchedly situation by the use of medicines. In this case the signs of putridity were entirely wanting. The general health of this patient was good, except at those periods when the menstrial discharge should have taken place in obedience to a healthy law of nature. At this time there was a violent struggle of the system producing epileptic convulsions and mania. In consequence of these repeated insurrections of the system in this case, without any decided relief, the girl was fast hastening the period of confirmed idiosyncrasy. The treatment directed in this case, although a hopeless one, was pediluvium of lime, issues in the legs just below the knees, friction to the thighs



sacrocaudal and pubic regions, comp. line of alveoli
 with right in direction does these things in day,
 leads to the arms and vulva, and injection of
 ammonia into the vagina. She was ordered
 to be bled in the foot if epileptic convulsions
 threatened, which was done, and successfully
 repelled the threatened attack, once at least,
 according to the report of a very intelligent
 student of the house. Notwithstanding this course
 of treatment was persevered in for some length
 of time, it failed, ~~proved altogether unavailing~~
 and failed to give the poor girl the least
 relief. Of the remedies recommended in
 the former part of this dissertation, together
 with those which were resorted to in this
 case just detailed, fail to relieve the pa-
 tients labouring under a retention of the
 menstrual discharge, this case may be
 considered as irremediable, and the pa-



life must be reluctantly abandoned by the
 physician, to linger out a melancholy existence,
 a burthen to herself, and an object of com-
 miseration to her friends.



